

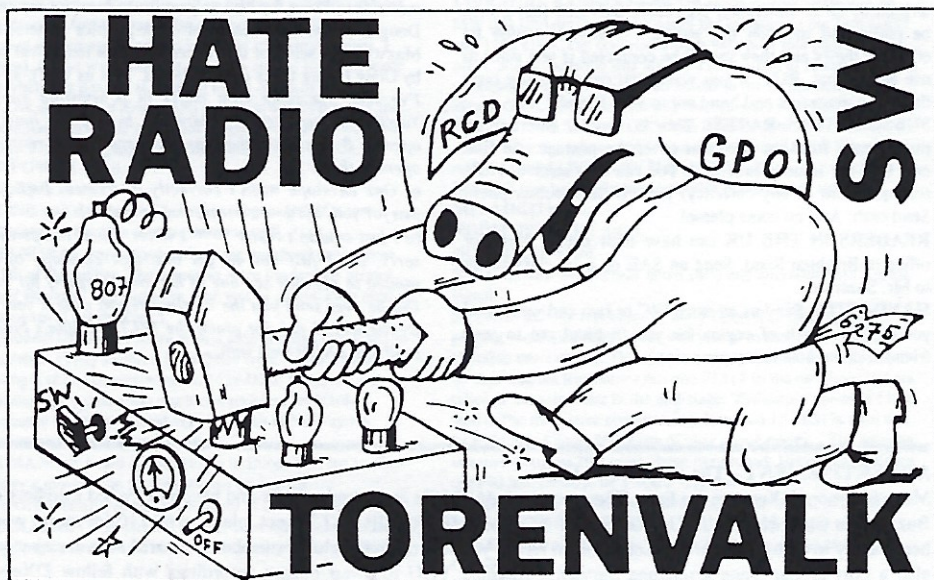
Interference magazine

NUMBER TWO - JANUARY / FEBRUARY 1999 - PRICE: an IRC or so - DEADLINE NEXT ISSUE: end of March

Interference number one was well received by most readers. I have decided to continue publishing it for a while. Interference magazine will be sent out once every second month, with anything between one and 12 pages depending on the amount of contributions from you out there. I can't squeeze very much more out of my little head, I'm afraid! YOU MUST WRITE! (Thanks to those who sent in material for this edition. It was highly appreciated!)

As you can see, the editor has changed his name from *Q. R. Emerson* to the far less elegant and original *Kai Salve Salvesen*. So Interference is not published in the UK - but in Norway! I'm sure no-one guessed...

I'm planning to write an article about *Norwegian pirate radio in the past*. If anyone knows anything at all about this (however little it may be!), get in touch with me! Another article which I may write is this: «*Situationism and the situationist approach to pirate radio*». I have to do some research on this, so if anyone knows anything - or have suggestions - please get in touch!



INTERFERENCE - EUROPE'S LEADING FREE RADIO FANZINE!

What will Interference magazine be - and what will we not be?

Q. R. Emerson explains

Interference magazine will not try to be the world's most comprehensive source of pirate information. It's more a forum for subjective witterings of various kinds.

We will not publish addresses. If you need a pirate's address, then get a copy of *Martin Schöch's excellent list*. You can get this (within Europe) for 6 DM / 3 IRCs / 3 US\$ / £2 / 6 hfl / 20 SEK in notes or stamps. Airmail outside Europe: 8 DM / 4 IRCs / 5 US\$. The list is HUGE and well worth the price. Address: Martin Schöch, Postfach 1136, 06201 Merseburg, GERMANY.

If you're into *Dutch MW-pirates*, then contact the DPRS. DPRS publish lists and they also run a QSL bureau for many (most?) Dutch pirates. Address: Derek Taylor, 12 Dorman Road, Preston, PR2 6AS, ENGLAND.

We will not concentrate heavily on the news side, and we will not publish long log-lists. If you need regular and updated pirate information, then subscribe to *SRS News*. *SRS News* is published once a week and is the source of pirate information in Europe. The bulletin is available via the web, via e-mail and also via regular post. Address: SRS, Östra Porten 29, 442 54 YTTERBY, SWEDEN.

INTERFERENCE is a pirate radio fanzine issued in Norway. The editor is Kai Salve Salvesen. We rely heavily on written contributions from the readers and will print almost anything!

INTERFERENCE IS ISSUED once every two months. The maximum number of pages is 12, because with twelve pages (and an envelope) we're just under the 20g limit and thus keep the postage costs as low as possible! (Sorry if the print is too small for you. If you have problems reading the zine because of this, ask for an A4 version!)

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES: This is simple. Interference magazine is free, but you must cover the postage. An IRC or a US\$ per issue is excellent. You can also send 40 NOK (or equivalent in any currency) for a 6 issue subscription. Send cash. And no coins please!

READERS IN THE UK can have their copies from our office in Brighton Road. Send an SAE or a 1st class stamp to Mr. Sharrard.

HAND-OUTS: Send us an extra IRC or two and we'll send you a little bunch of copies for you to hand out to your friends! (State how many you want.)

ADDRESSES:

Editor:

Kai Salve Salvesen
1B266 Kringsjaa Studentby
Sognsveien 218
0864 OSLO
NORWAY
Kaiss@student.sv.uio.no

UK office:

Doug Sharrard
64 Brighton Road
Leicester
LE5 0HA
ENGLAND

You can use whichever address you want. But if you want to get in touch with me, the editor, the address in Oslo is naturally the fastest! And also - a little warning: If you send material to Doug for him to pass on to me, please note that Doug is a notorious reader of other peoples' letters! James Maxwell has sent me this excerpt from a letter sent to him by Doug (Doug takes care of James' post as well): *«Firstly, I've sent you some «fan mail» in a separate envelope. You'll find two letters (addressed to you) to have been opened. By me! Now these are my excuses, er, reasons for opening them.*

a) One envelope wasn't correctly addressed. I guessed it was for you, but I was bored, so I opened it!

*b) I just couldn't resist ****'s letter. I had to open it. I'm sorry, but I just had to get into that envelope of his. I wanted to actually see one of his lovely reports for myself! Did he ever send you the original report over a year ago? By the way, I did not pinch the IRC! He didn't bother to send one.»* Well well well.

ADVERTISEMENT - The Buzzer Fan Club

More and more DXers see the light: They tune in to 4625 kHz on a regular basis and become devoted members of the Buzzer Fan Club. **HAVE YOU SIGNED UP FOR MEMBERSHIP YET?** If not, please send £10 (or more) worth of beer money to Doug Sharrard in Leicester. In return you will receive a glossy membership card! As a member you're also a part of our Tape Exchange Service - enabling YOU to swap buzzer recordings with fellow DXers. **SO WRITE OFF TODAY!** The address is this: C/o 64 Brighton Road, Leicester, LE5 0HA, ENGLAND.

Interference problems - how to deny them

By Sean O'Lacey

One problem that free radio stations constantly face, is the accusation of causing interference.

Perhaps we had better start with what constitutes interference.

If a free station is raided, what has happened to its signal? It has gone, it is not there, it has therefore been interfered with.

Under article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights «Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart ideas and information through any media regardless of frontiers».

«...Without interference», yet the so-called «law» enforcement DTI / PTT / SODS have just interfered considerably with someone's rights in imparting, and any amount of people's rights in seeking and receiving ideas and information.

The interference the «authorities» blatantly come out with in court, when attempting to prosecute a free radio operator, is (usually) that of interference to emergency services. Interesting, when one considers that when the licensed «Choice FM» station came on air from Crystal Palace in London, it could be heard throughout much of London on 5 different frequencies, and was also knocking out a police repeater at Forest Hill. For some obscure reason, Choice FM was not prosecuted...

Other examples of this form of interference can be heard virtually any time that an RSL station goes on 1503 kHz. Go anywhere within 3 or so miles from the transmitter, and tune to 3006 kHz, if you can't hear the RSL, get a better radio! Go a bit nearer, and try them out on 6012 kHz, again, ditch your radio if you can't hear them! One reason for the harmonics occurring on MW RSL stations in Britain is down to the stupid rules they have to abide by. The aerial cannot be longer than 10 metres. The aerial cannot be higher than 10 metres off the ground. Only 1 watt is allowed. Setting aside any arguments about whether that watt is erp, or the output from the rig, 10 metres of aerial will be nicely resonant at around 40 metres, or 7 or so megs. Of course, the station will view the 1 watt allowed as erp, and will try stuffing as much power as possible up the 10 metres, arguing that the inefficiency of the aerial will require a huge loss in power... That power has to go somewhere, and faced with an aerial that is almost harmonically resonant, even the best-built rig will sprog.

So what interference can be expected with free radio?

LW and MW do not cause too many problems, harmonics can be easily tuned to, and got rid of (or at least reduced to a few milliwatts). The main problem is with these horrible cheap and nasty bleep bleep telephones. These are nothing more than a mass of diodes, transistors and chips, all capable of rectifying. Plug this horrible mass into a long wire, that runs down the house, across the street and all over the place, and you will have a modern equivalent of the crystal set. If neighbours complain, either get some ferrite clip-on chokes, that fit over the wires, give them an old dial-type phone, or, if this fails to work, and the guy is becoming a nuisance, stop his interference once and for all by simply cutting his phone line. Mobile phones will not suffer, but the old cordless phones, operating on 1662 and 1792 kHz could either pick up a harmonic, and play music to your neighbour, or, once the call has ended, leave the access on, and give him a massive phone bill!

SW may sometimes cause this problem, in particular SSB, and certain frequencies may cause problems with TV, the Herringbone effect on the screen, or breaking on top of the sound. Persuade your neighbour that cable or satellite is the way to go, and get a dish etc from the local boot fair, and install it.

FM. This band is a real pain in the backside. TV will suffer if the rig goes even slightly out of tune, and this could be caused by anything from a hot day to a sudden snowstorm. Again, offer to sort the problems as for SW.

The important thing is to be seen to be attempting to sort out the problem, by providing, out of your own pocket, alternatives, your neighbours should come to realise that you aren't such a nuisance after all, and could even offer to help out on occasion.

Of course, the other option is to move the broadcast site, but this will involve linking to the rig, and the link itself could be causing interference. Most raids occur because the link is on or 10.7 MHz away from some utility or other. Even if it's the fault of their equipment, you will be the one ending up in the dock.

On the other hand, if you broadcast direct into the rig, that's only one transmitter.

The choice is yours, I'm off to race for Sauber now, seeya soon.

Q. R. Emerson says: If you cause interference to your neighbour's TV, buy him a high pass (or band pass) filter! These are cheap and are easily installed...But they will of course just help if the interfering signal reaches the TV set via the antenna. This isn't always the case, I guess.

How do those cordless MW phones work by the way? There are no such devices in use in Norway. (Well, I have heard some cordless MW phones here in Oslo, but they are illegal!)

Report from Norway

By Kai Salve Salvesen

So, the Christmas is over and I'm back in Oslo. As some of you will know, I am not able to listen to pirates at my current location in Oslo. I live in a huge block of flats, and the thick concrete walls with lots of metal reinforcements in them make it impossible to hear anything without an outdoor antenna. And there's no space for an outdoor antenna (well, there is space enough for a very small one - and I have tried it of course, but all I pick up is local QRM!). I could of course have myself a stroll out in the forest and DX from there (I have the famous Nordmarka forest virtually outside the door). But it is not so pleasant to sit outside on a bench listening to the radio when the temperature is below zero and there's snow on the ground and... Well. So what does a poor SW enthusiast do? He waits until he has a few days of spare time so that he can go home to his parents in Grimstad and listen to the radio there. My parents (and my brothers and sister) live in the countryside, and the location is excellent for SW listening - I can hang up some very long antennas if I want to!

I spent almost the entire month of December - and a few days in January - at home in Grimstad, and I did quite a bit of DXing of course. Well, I must admit that I didn't listen as much as I have used to in the past, because I was a bit fed up by this whole free radio thing (for many reasons!). But I spent a few evenings - and nights - with my Yaesu communications receiver and heard quite a few interesting stations.

I wonder if any SW listener in the entire world spends as much time hanging up antennas as I do. I usually take down all the antennas before going back to Oslo. I guess I don't actually have to do that, but the antennas don't look too beautiful hanging across the garden in all possible shapes and directions. My parents say they wouldn't mind if I just let the antennas hang, but I like to tidy up a bit before leaving home... So whenever I return home (usually on a Friday evening) I have to get all those antennas up again - and I usually have some new ideas to try out - so I often spend several days in the garden (and on the roof and in the top of rather tall trees) hanging up those dipoles and whatever they are.

This Christmas I used a *dipole for 76 metres* (10 metres high), *100 metres of wire for MW* (this antenna didn't work too well - probably because it was too low and also because it picked up a lot of local QRM - so I ended up using the 76 metre band dipole for MW as well), a *dipole for 48 metres* (or there about) and a *CB antenna* (which works very well as far down as on 15 metres). So nothing exceptional...

So what have did I hear in December?

The first station I picked up after I came home on Saturday the 5th was *Radio Korak* on 3927 kHz. Unfortunately, I only caught the last few minutes of that particular programme. But Willem is widely known for his close-downs, so I guess I caught the best part of the programme. HI. Radio Korak was also heard on the 25th - and this was his annual Christmas show. This show didn't turn out so well as previous years, though, because Willem had some problems on the technical side. I believe there was something wrong with the crystal or the oscillator or whatever. I think Willem is something of a perfectionist who wants everything to be just perfect when he's on air. And I understand that! I wish there were more perfectionists among the pirates! Willem was on the air for some three hours, though, and a nice selection of pop music and Christmas tunes was heard. There were also greetings (some of them on tape) from listeners to listeners. (I'm sorry I didn't contribute this year, Willem!)

Radio Blackbeard was heard on the 6th. He was testing on around 3925 kHz and was heard well here. He uses much more power now than he did in the past. Blackbeard was very active in December with programmes on both 76 and 183 metres (see MW section as well!). The programmes from this station are always live, and Dave made some comments this Christmas about all those awful taped programmes that can be heard on the pirate bands. I suppose he's right. Live programmes are in many cases more interesting than taped ones. Taped broadcasts may of course also be good. But the tape approach is probably best suited for a completely different type of radio than what most pirates offer. I quite like Dave's programmes. The music (usually some light pop music) is OK, and the DJing is entertaining as well.

I wonder if anyone of you ever listen to *Radio for Peace International*. It is not a pirate of course, but I feel that it deserves a mention anyway! I listened to them almost every day in December! The signal on 21460 USB is usually very good nowadays - so my experience in December was that (at least some days) they were audible with S4-5 signals (S as in SINPO) at any time of the day on one frequency or another. 21450 kHz was often very good in the early afternoon, 11470 used to take over as the best channel a bit later in the afternoon. And when 11470 faded out, 7590 was there, ready to take over... 3905 was usually a bit on the weak side, but this channel was also very good certain evenings. So if you're a tape-pirate and want your programmes to be heard by lots of people, then SWRS is the best choice, I think. I don't think it costs anything either to have programmes relayed via SWRS - and that's quite impressive!

SWRS - the Short Wave Relay Service - is an interesting pirate indeed. I spent many days listening to this particular station. They transmit on four different frequencies in parallel, and they use a considerable amount of power on each channel - so my experience in December was that (at least some days) they were audible with S4-5 signals (S as in SINPO) at any time of the day on one frequency or another. 21450 kHz was often very good in the early afternoon, 11470 used to take over as the best channel a bit later in the afternoon. And when 11470 faded out, 7590 was there, ready to take over... 3905 was usually a bit on the weak side, but this channel was also very good certain evenings. So if you're a tape-pirate and want your programmes to be heard by lots of people, then SWRS is the best choice, I think. I don't think it costs anything either to have programmes relayed via SWRS - and that's quite impressive!

Now what sorts of programmes can you hear on SWRS? Well, most of the stations who use the service are slightly uninteresting. Most of them play a few records and read out the station name and address inbetween. I think some of the stations could have done more out of their programmes and thereby justified the enormous amount of time and efforts that the SWRS people obviously spend to keep the station on air. Having said this, though, I should point out that some of the stations make very good programmes indeed. *Free Radio Service Holland* have been noted via SWRS, and they're known to make some decent shows. Another interesting station, and a station that

I haven't been aware of until just recently, is *Eurorock* from Germany. The programmes are hosted by Jeff Anderson, and in December he also had a co-DJ in the studio, namely Jeff Anderson jr. (who sounded very young!). They played some neat rock tunes by groups such as Manfred Mann's Earth Band, The Doors, Aerosmith... Jeff Anderson jr. introduced «Final Countdown» by Europe - a big favourite among the pirates! The Two DJs certainly know how to speak into a microphone and how to make a decent show. More of this!

Radio Wonderful, also from Germany, had their first try via the SWRS in December, and they were well received at my side. The programme was as good as always of course! I really like their weird style of programming. DJ Chris and DJ Yellow played a nice selection of pop tunes (Queen, Manic Street Preachers, Cher... Yes, that record by Cher was of course that notorious «Do you believe in love» - or whatever it's called!) and broadcast yet another DX programme hosted by the famous DX Doctor.

Yet another interesting station heard on SWRS is *Britain's Better Music Station*. Did you know that BBMS have a German branch? Well, they have a German DJ at least! Bobby Sparks is his name, and he was heard playing oldies via SWRS on the 19th.

Scream of the Butterfly is an American station that has had a few programmes relayed via SWRS. The programme aired in December was a strange mixture of stuff aired in the past. The first «rare archive recordings» (as they'd say in offshore circles) was from the moment when the station's ship ran into an iceberg and sank! Then there was something about aliens. I must admit I didn't quite get all of this. I find American-English very difficult to understand, especially on a noisy shortwave! I noted several skits (I understood none of them) and there was an ad for breathing! (It went on about how great it is to breathe!) The operator mentioned the recent FCC offensive against the 6955 pirates and said he'd concentrate on Europe until the situation stabilizes in the US.

The Andino Relay Service, normally operating from somewhere in the Andean mountains, have also had some shows relayed via the SWRS. The programmes contain some nice Andean tunes, and it can be worth while to listen!

Other stations heard via SWRS include: *Radio Silver* (boring rock'n roll format), *Radio Strike* (plays a lot of nice Latin American music), *Radio Blaudunne*, *Treasure Island Oldies*, *WLQI* (*Your Low IQ Station*), *SWRS* (with own programmes), *Radio Natalie* (plays music from Estonia), *Yellow Submarine Radio*.

Now there are of course still pirates that operate their own transmitters - *Trance SW* for example! Trance was heard on 3910.1 kHz on Friday the 11th, and the signal was excellent. The programme was nice as well. The music (dance) isn't my cup of tea, but the presentation was fairly good. This particular programme was said to be a test. I look forward to hearing some «genuine» broadcasts from this station!

Ozone was heard on 6199.4 kHz on the 12th. I believe this was some sort of a test, but this station is nevertheless always interesting to listen to. Mr. Ozone tends to play a lot of fine rock (we never get tired of «Another Brick in the Wall» of course!) and he always has something interesting to say as well. In this particular programme he told a mate of his that he hadn't removed the tank coil and wondered if that made any difference. I have no idea what a tank coil is, but I like it when the pirates talk about the things that happen in the studio, at the TX site etc. I wish more pirates would do that!

By the way, I accused Ozone of being a British station in last issue of *Interference*. This is of course not correct!

Xenon Transmitting Company is a station which I don't hear too often. The signal is usually poor, but the programmes are excellent, so I'll try to tune in to this station a bit more often in the future! I heard him on the 12th of December on 6290.4 kHz. The signal was fairly good, and I listened for an hour or so. (I wasn't able to listen any longer, Mr. Teabags - I'll tell you why in a separate letter! It's an interesting story...) The programme was very nice anyway - Tommy played a fine selection of rock tunes («Whisky in the Jar», Metallica, Supergrass, Wireless...) and had several interesting things to say as well. XTC seems to have taken up the same «concept» as many other British pirates nowadays - i.e. they don't emphasize the music so much - they're more interested in the spoken content. And I like that! I wish the British pirates were easier to hear at my side!

East Coast Holland is a fine Dutch broadcaster that was heard on the 20th on 6276.9 kHz. He played some nice jingles and a bunch of nice oldies. RECH has a marvellous audio quality!

The ever so controversial *Farmers from Nieuwleusen* certainly deserve a mention. They keep occupying a little band of frequencies on 48 metres (around 6284 at the moment) most (perhaps all) Sundays. Need I say that this is one of my big favourites? I can't understand why so many are angry with them - I appreciate what they're doing! (Well, they could've done something about that annoying splatter of course...) I noted one of my favourite records on this station one morning: «De Fles» (I can't remember the name of the group). This tune is used by the famous Kluizenars on MW as some sort of a signature tune. The word «fles» means «bottle», and although I don't understand much of the text, I'm almost sure that it captures fairly well some of the sentiments of the Dutch pirate scene!

Laser Hot Hits is still there of course. I often listen to this station, but I rarely note it down. I can't understand why, H! I heard them play the Spanish version of Abba's «I have a dream» one evening, and I just had to note that down in my log book - simply because that's one of my favourite records! LHH tend to play a lot of fine music in fact. But the presentation isn't too interesting (I hope no-one will kill me for having said this!) - I think they could have livened things up a bit. I dunno.

International Music Radio - an old favourite - is still active every now and again on 76 metres. I heard two interesting Monday evening transmissions from this station, one on the 21st, another on the 28th. Operator Yves played some nice pop records and read out pirate logs from the previous weeks (his own and those of Ralf Dallek and the DX Doctor). It took him almost two hours to get through all those logs - two hours on both Mondays! As I said last time, I like this station because of the spontaneity and liveliness. Even long lists of logs are interesting when they're read out by this crazy Swiss chap! Mr. Yves has a slogan, by the way, which he keeps repeating at the end of each broadcast: «Remember - nobody can change our mind!» - I guess they can't!

I received a letter from Yves some days ago, and he tells me that he doesn't receive much response for his broadcasts. The only feedback he gets is that of a handful of faithful listeners and friends that keep tuning in each time. He also says that he may do some programmes in the Swiss German dialect in the future - and in these programmes he will also play some Swiss music. He says that he's probably the only person in the free radio community that can do such shows. This sounds very exciting! Yves! I look forward to hearing some of those shows. It's good to hear that there are still some creative persons out there who are willing to try new things. (And that Swiss dialect is just beautiful, isn't it? H!)

Yves has also done some broadcasts on 41 metres recently (none of them have been heard in Grimstad), and he has now decided to try out 43 metres because of rising QRM level on 41 metres. Listen out for him in the 6955-6965 area.

The Free Radio Network is a joint project between several FM operators in central England. They were heard via Radio Blackbeard on the 23rd. The frequency was 3940 (or there about), and the reception suffered quite a bit from splatter from the BBC on 3955. The two DJs played a varied bunch of records and closed down rather early as they had some work and shopping to do the day after...

The Borderhunter is back under his old name! Good! He was heard many times over the festive season, and the programmes were as enjoyable as usual! The programmes are always presented in a laid-back manner, and Frans plays virtually all sorts of music. In one particular broadcasts I noted music by such diverse artists / groups as Jim Reeves, Kraftwerk, Pink Floyd, Toto, Europe, Dire Straits and Supertramp (as well as a bunch of Dutch or Belgian stuff). During a late night QSO with James Maxwell that took place on 3905 kHz, Frans revealed that he was sitting in a dark room with a couple of candle-lights by his side. James then told that he was sitting in a very cold room (he couldn't lock the window because there were some co-ax cables running through it!). Frans then went on about all the unpleasant places he'd transmitted from in the past and concluded by saying: «Well, that's the life of the free man, you know»...

Live Wire Radio - Billo - is back! Yes, Bill had at least two appearances on 76 metres in December, and he was also heard on the good old middengolf - see separate MW section! I heard Billo on 3905 kHz on the 25th / 26th of December. The signal was amazing! Some light pop music was played, and I appreciated hearing a few records by Abba. The presentation was very lively - yes, I'd even say witty and humorous! Bill sounded slightly less laid-back now than he did a couple of years ago - he sounded very enthusiastic indeed! I hope to hear more from you when I return home again at Easter, Billo!

Something interesting happened just after Bill had signed on on the 25th. He was received with a nice and steady S9+40 - but then his signal suddenly dropped to just below S9! A few moments later Bill switched off the TX, and I thought he'd blown a valve or two. But what had actually happened was that his antenna had fallen down... So I received him with almost S9 while his antenna was at zero metres! Impressive! After a few minutes of hard work outside the shack, Billo was back on air. It is incidents like this that make pirate radio interesting!

Radio Mi Amigo was an interesting station that was on 3925 kHz on the 26th of December. He played some well-known offshore tunes: «Man's fight for freedom», «Caroline», «We love the pirate stations». He said he was on the air to reminisce the offshore stations - and he called these stations «trendsetters». Well, I suppose they were. But what an awful trend. I truly hate commercial radio. I wonder why so many pirate enthusiasts care so much about commercial and offshore radio. (Well, I suppose this is something that I as a foreigner can't really understand. I guess one has to be British or Dutch to understand this offshore enthusiasm!)

Other stations heard here in December (and the first days of January): *Benelux* 7479.9 and 3904.6, *BBMS* 7414.8, *Blue Star* 3908, *Maxwell* 3908L (QSO), *Dr. Tim* 3910 (QSO), *Transatlantic* 3894.5, *Boomerang* 6275, *Spaceman* 6260, *Micky Mouse* 3936 (very good modulation!), *RFL* 3919.6 and 5804.5, *Driland* 6210, *Crazy Wave Radio* 7461.6, *Reflections Europe* 3910 and 6295 (does anyone actually listen to them?), *UK Radio* 6266.3.

What Doug heard

Doug Sharrard in Leicester heard these stations in December: *Korak* 3927, *Dr. Tim* 3940 and 3941 (DX news), *Gunsmoke* 3930, *Blue Star* 3907 and 3910, *Lester* 3930 and 6219 (Mike Andrews and offshore tapes), *UK Radio* 6266 (70ies disco music), *The Farmers* 6285v, *RFL* 3920, 3805 and 6305, *WMR* 7446 (Jack Russell), *Caroline* 6235 (Johnny Lewis), *Ozone* 6199 and 5790 (talked about worn stylus!), *Reflections Europe* 3910 and 6295 (Crap! Rubbish!), *XTC* 6290 and 6299 (Tommy Teabags), *EMR* 6299 (Techno music), *Mickey Mouse* 3936, *Trance SW* 6235, *Pandora* 6308v (Steve St. John), *FRSH* 6210 6240, *IMR* 3900L and 3936L (QSO), *Transatlantic* 3895 (dance music), *Blackbeard* 3905, 3935 and 3940, *Live Wire Radio* 3905 and 3936, *Speedwing* 3900L (QSO), *RWI* 11401, *Marabu* 6210, *ALI* 6269, *Sierra Sierra* 3912, *Spaceman* 3927, *Grensjäger* 3935, *Maxwell* 3935U (QSO), *Pamela* 5773 (Steve Most), *Union* 6210, *Orion* 6257 («The Big Ostrich»), *Subterranean Sounds* 6307, *RECH* / *VOTN* 7478 (New Year's programme).

What Tom heard

Tom Read in Macclesfield has sent his December and January logs. I think the list is his entry to the Michel Ravigneaux contest - and it's long! You have sure been busy listening this Christmas season, Mr. Read! I can't find space for the entire list in this magazine (nor have I got a log list in this issue which I can make Tom's logs fit into) - so I'll just mention the stations (in alphabetical order) that he has heard: *Alpha Lima International* 6270, *Britain's Better Music Station* 5790, 7525 and via SWRS, *Church of the Subgenious* via SWRS (talk about drugs and coffee beans), *Con Frecuencia* via SWRS, *Crazy Wave Radio* via SWRS, *Crystal* 6310 (QSO with Sub Sounds), *EMR* 5795, *Eurorock* via SWRS (Classic rock, Eagle Eyed Cherry, Peter Frampton), *Extra-Terrestrial Discs* via SWRS, *Farmers from Holland* (Dutch and rock music, traditional waltzes), *Free Radio Network* 3941 (Christmas records), *FRSH* via SWRS and on 6205, *Highland Classic Rock* via SWRS (80ies rock), *Jolly Roger Radio* 6235 (Joe Vincent, country music), *KUOI FM* via SWRS (Death Row, Leigh's Incredible...), *Laser Hot Hits* 3930, 6219 and 7415, *Live Wire Radio* 3905 and 3936, *Ozone* 5790, 6200 and 7525 (Organ music, Muppet Show, Christmas records and heavy metal music noted), *Play DX Music* via SWRS, *Radio 510 International* 3985, *Armadillo* 5824 and 6287, *Radio Baloney* 3936U (QSO), *Blackbeard* 3905 and 3941 (drinking), *Blandengue* via SWRS (Andean pipe music), *Blue Star* 6910, *Borderhunter* 3936 and 3941U, *Caroline* 6210, *Flamingo* via SWRS (70s music), *RFL* 3920 and 5805, *Magic* 6235 (Waterford address), *Marabu* 6211 (punk rock music), *Maxwell* 3936U and 3941U (QSO), *Mi Amigo Int.* 3926, 5815, 6235 (offshore radio, Rotterdam address), *Mirage* 6200 (psychedelic music), *Natalie* via SWRS (music from Estonia), *Orion* 6258, 6275 and 6300, *Pamela* 5773, *Perfekt* 3941 and 6209, *Stardust* via SWRS, *Strike* via SWRS, *Torenavalk* 3895, *Waves Int.* via SWRS (15 years on the air), *Zodiac* 6200 and 6270, *Reflections Europe* 3910 and 6295 (Jack van Impe, Radio Outreach), *Spaceman* 6261 (Led Zeppelin track), *Subterranean Sounds* 6291 and 6310, *SWRS*, *Scream of the Butterfly* via SWRS (Johnny Rock, New Source Radio), *Treasure Island* via SWRS (oldies, requests), *UK Radio* 6267, *Union* 6200, *WMR* 3910, 3945, 6278, 6297, 6306 and 7446, *WLIQ* via SWRS (Gaeity Record Show, Mr. Dovetail Show), *WUINH* via SWRS ("Do the Monkey", investigating FCC, clandestine radio), *XTC* 6292, *Yellow Submarine Radio* via SWRS (60s, 70s and 80s music). The MW logs have been included in the MW section.

11 metres

It seems that some American pirates are keen on trying out 11 metres. Some heavy disputes on this matter have taken place in the FRN Grapevine (on the Internet) recently. Some operators think that operations on 11 metres would be too much like CBing. Rubbish! Good pirate programmes can be broadcast on this like any other band of course.

I monitored the 11 metre broadcast band (25670-26100 kHz) most days in December (I had a scan through the band once every hour! As a student I can DX while, er, working, HI). But I didn't hear any pirates. I'm sure it should have been possible for an American pirate to reach Europe on that band, though, because the conditions are very good at the moment. If you monitor 27555 USB, you'll hear many American (outlawed) CB operators calling CQ in the afternoons. The signals can be quite good. Also, I heard two «feeders» inside the actual BC band: On 25780 kHz there's WFLA from Tampa (FL), and on 25910 I heard WJFP Port Pierce (also FL). The signals were often good, and I'm sure they don't use such an awful lot of power. (I think they use FM modulation, though, so they will sound rather shabby on an AM receiver.)

Here's my plea to you pirate operators out there: Start using 11 metres! Give Radio Budapest some company! (Radio Budapest is the only broadcaster that currently uses this band.)

Interference magazine is a trendsetter

Now did that come as a surprise to anyone? Well, after having received Interference #1, the editor of FRMSEM, the excellent British free radio zine, immediately changed the format of his publication from the clumsy A4 to the much better A5 format! FRMSEM now looks very good indeed, and the content is as good as ever.

The Wave is back!

This great magazine from the past has reappeared on the Internet. The site is still under construction, and I will review it here in Interference when it's finished. <http://www.franklin49.freereserve.co.uk>.

THE LINGUISTICAL CORNER

In this edition: Weird Dutch expressions

Anne and Johan at Radio Barones were obviously amused by some of the (tentative) Dutch expressions I used in last issue. Johan made some rather funny comments about this in one of his programmes (early December). I also received a letter from Anne in which she explains to me what the expressions mean. «*Goed voor de bakker*» or (heard most often) «*dik voor de bakker*» means that everything is OK, i.e. that the signal is good and that the modulation is fine. According to Anne, Radio Noordzee was the one who made this expression popular. She doesn't know where this rather strange expression comes from, though. («*Good for the baker*» should be a decent English translation, I think.)

«*Voor Jan en alleman*» is an expression that has been around (at least) since the early 70ies, Anne says. It means simply: «*For everybody*». In my Dutch-English dictionary this expression is translated into this equally weird English expression: «*For every Tom, Dick and Harry*».

Anne has another goodie for us as well: What does it mean when a Dutch pirate says «*Je zit in de fille*»? I don't know, and Anne does not say. What do YOU think it means? PLEASE SEND US YOUR ANSWER BEFORE NEXT DEADLINE! (Dutch readers can naturally not take part in this little contest, HI.)

Doug Sharrard in Leicester once sent me a Dutch expression which he wanted to have figured out. I'm not sure if I dare to include it in this column, because he thought that it might be something rude. But OK, here it is: «~~*****~~». Any ideas? **NO, I JUST DON'T DARE TO PRINT IT!**

Q.R. Emerson

GERMAN FREE RADIO STATION ON 48 AND 76M

**RADIO-
WONDERFUL**

The best Music of Free Radio

p.o. box 220342 D-42373 Wuppertal, Germany

MARIO
★ Medium Wave ★
★ Power Station ★
★ from Holland ★
P.O. Box 185, 7470 AD Goor, The Netherlands

THE PIRATE RADIO FORUM

Letters from the readers

Most of the entries this (first) time are about *Interference* magazine as such. But in the future this column is open for any type of entry. And please note that this column isn't solely meant for heated debates! You can simply write about how the conditions have been on the bands, what kind of stations you've been listening to, what kind of set-up you've got at the listening post, etc. In short: You can send whatever kind of entry you want!

Hello Interference! Thanks for number one. Living language and interesting topics. Readers with other opinions can write and read their own fanzines... Jens Adolph, Leipzig

(...) I was not pleased to read the comments about dx'ers and QSL collecting. I'm sort of sending you this letter as a protest about this and hope you will refrain in the future from running down dx'ers. It is not unusual for some SW free radio stations to be operated by dx'ers you know. Okay I stop now and look forward to reading further issues of the magazine. (...) Lionel Roithmeir, Guernsey

I seem to have upset some of you by what I wrote about spoof reports and QSLing in general in last issue. OK, I suppose what I wrote was somewhat silly. As you understand, I'm not very interested in the QSL side of the hobby, and I just couldn't understand what the fuzz was all about. But if I'm not interested, then why should I have such strong opinions on this? The truth is that I have no strong opinions on the matter - I was just trying to make a witty comment about it. But I suppose I may instead have sounded awfully arrogant and aggressive. I apologize for that!

Derek Taylor in Preston sent me a letter in which he criticizes me for what I wrote on that notorious page six. Some of you may think that Derek and I are deadly enemies now. Fortunately this is not the case!

Many thanks for «Interference» radio fanzine. It is very good and I hope to be a contributor. Please let me know how many copies were sent out in total. I have not been in touch with Q.R. Emerson before (...) - who is he? (...) The new fanzine is a tremendous opportunity to bring us all together to exchange views, ideas and hopefully promote the hobby. (...) SRS logs section is boring, Interference logs are better. (...) Harry the Cat, Scotland

Thanks for your kind comments, Harry. You should know by now who Q.R. Emerson is, HI. The magazine was initially sent out to about 40 pirate enthusiasts. I have since printed a few more copies, so I think that well over 50 persons should have received *Interference* #1. This is not much of course, but not so bad either... I agree with your comment about log-lists. Long lists of dates, times, frequencies and station names are boring (but can be useful in many cases).

(...) I don't mind helping a little, but I don't really know what to send - I don't keep logs exactly and as far as articles are concerned, I wonder if the time taken to produce them is worth the end result. E.g. there are still people out there who only listen on telescopic antennas etc. etc. etc.! People don't seem to want to be helped...

I think the main part of your magazine should be devoted to what most of us can hear. If you do FM things then don't do too much! Equally the Dutch MW stations are worth mentioning (we can all hear them!), but there is other people talking about them.

By the way, I have yet to be impressed by compression, though I guess it may make a transceiver sound better. Equally, if you want to limit the audio this can be done by watching your mixer or recording levels.

Different bands - you know Live Wire / WMR Scotland / PFBS used 15 MHz some years back with US reception. WMR were heard in the Pacific. This was during the last solar maximum. Radio Orion used 25 MHz some years back and were heard in the US. I agree, the 25-26 MHz region is an obvious place for pirate radio! By the way, Radio Pamela is currently on 20260 here and there, with 8 watts.

The «Half the fun» item was interesting. I could give you «half the answers»! Though a lot is still a mystery. I would agree though that a high (in terms of wavelength) aerial putting out a signal on 15 MHz with horizontal set-up is obviously more awkward to detect. Steve Midnight, UK

I hope you don't mind me printing the entire letter you wrote... Thanks for many interesting comments! A special plea to all readers: Get rid of those shabby telescopic antennas and perhaps we'll see some articles by Mister Midnight in the future! HI.

(...) Da hast du dir echt was tolles ausgedacht. Schon die erste Zeile vom Magazin hat uns überzeugt, da sitzt ein echter FR-Fan hinter. Alle anderen Publikationen lesen wir ja nur, um zu kontrollieren ob nicht zuviel über uns drinsteht. (...) Radio Barones, The Netherlands

You can read more of Anne's comments in «The linguistic corner» elsewhere in this magazine. Anne, thanks for the nice comments! I am aware of my responsibilities as the editor of this magazine, and I shall try not to say too much about the various stations. If anyone reckons I reveal too many sensitive facts about his or her station (or about others' stations!) - PLEASE SAY SO! It would sure be sad if stations were raided or got into other trouble because of this fanzine.

(...) Thanks for the «nice» words about my Bellabarba page. You were only the second who really criticized that page. I can tell you one of the causes I'm doing this, it's sheer envy, that he gets QSLs I can't get! But the page has already changed, it's not so sharp as it was when I started. (...) As long as you won't bring the same items that Argus presents, your mag is very welcome, since Pirate Connection is not very «regular». (...) Martin Schöch, Merseburg

Martin Schöch is very active in the pirate radio information business - he's the man behind the best pirate address list currently available (see elsewhere in this fanzine), he has an enormous SW / clandestine / pirate page on the Internet (highly recommended!), he's co-editor of SRS News, etc... So I think he can be excused for not wanting to be a contributor to Interference! HI.

(...) Your humour / wit in the magazine has me laughing, And it usually takes a lot to make me laugh because I'm Mr. Miserable! The way you've worded your articles is amusing, to say the least. (...) Doug Sharrard, Leicester

(...) Well firstly congratulations on actually attempting to publish a magazine bi-monthly and providing an intelligent read for shortwave pirate enthusiasts. (...) What I do find encouraging from the first edition of Interference is that you seem to be interested in programme content and not just the idea of logging as many stations as you can. My opinion is that a lot of these Dutch powerhouse stations are ruining bands such as 48m and 76m, there seems to be an increasing number of them running more and more power, causing splatter to lower power, often more interesting operators. The Farmers are the obvious worst offenders, why do they bother coming on?

This past Sunday (17th Jan) was as bad as usual... Blue Star, Spaceman, Farmers. On the positive side I think there are still quite a few good stations out there, Radios Orion, Randora and Subterranean are amongst my favourites. What I'm saying is that if you concentrate more on stations that actually try to put some content in their programmes then your magazine can only be of benefit to the shortwave pirate community, and perhaps help to shape SW pirate radio in the future! (...) Q. R. Peacock, UK

I see what you mean. I agree in part. But come on - Spaceman and the Farmers are good! They do have a lot of followers, and I am one of them! I believe that any pirate has its charm. Having said this, though, I agree: More pirates should spend some time on the programme side of things, not only on the power... Thanks for having faith in «Interference» - let's hope the magazine makes a difference.

News from the UK pirate shortwave stations Christmas period to mid January

Written by one of our British readers

RADIO ORION - «The Big Ostrich» were noted several times over the festive period - Christmas Day, Sunday 27th, Monday 28th and New Year's Day. The Bogus Jobseeker (a.k.a. Mike Wilson) was programming in his usual inimitable manner. There were also quality programmes from Vic Hitler but sadly no more of the spoof Latin American station which went out in November which was one of the funniest things I've heard on shortwave. (It sounded like it was being run by Manuel from «Fawlty Towers»!) Bogus Jobseeker fans should also listen out on Saturday lunchtime for relays of UK Radio's FM service, 6290 is the most likely frequency for these.

RADIO ARMADILLO - «The Medium A» were logged with a marathon seven hour plus broadcast on 6290 then 5824. Mr. Armadillo read out an article about pirate radio, played a bit of «Rainbow», thrash metal and the Dooleys! Good station, just a little on the weak side unfortunately. Mail via Brighton Road.

SUBTERRANEAN SOUNDS - Steve Midnight gave an excellent resumé of all the activity from British shortwave pirates in 1998, in his Sunday 27th Dec broadcast on 6308, also played some of the records Subterranean featured last year and had plenty of people ringing in to register their listening. Steve Midnight was also noted Saturday 16th Jan on 6308 again, this time with some «Fortean» talk (strange coincidences, alien worlds etc.) and lots of music.

RADIO PANDORA - Dave Gregory has been heard hosting programmes as well as Steve St. John, Pandora being noted several times recently including 27th Dec and 10th Jan on 6307 kHz. Steve St. John said he had been chatting up two ladies in his local café and was also thinking about getting a mobile phone (for listener reports rather than to impress the women). Said he would try 41 metres if he could get Mr. Billo to sort the rig out.

XENON TRANSMITTING COMPANY were heard on Tuesday 29th Dec on 6290 with a four hour broadcast. Tommy Teabags was talking about the people he could see walking outside the studio, including a man with a tea cosy on his head. **RADIO PAMELA** are noted most Sundays on 5773 kHz, but Steve Most doesn't normally switch on until early afternoon. More stations are using the area around 5.8 MHz, but if stations go too low frequency wise they'll start sitting in the aeronautical band. Saying this though OZONE RADIO recently did a test on 5720 kHz, which was one of about 1000 different channels the station has appeared on recently (someone take that crystal marked «2182 kHz» away from Prince Terry quickly!).

RADIO FREE LONDON - RFL were noted a lot over Christmas on 5805 and 3920. The latter was noted most evenings but suffered from tinny audio. Andy Walker reappeared from self-imposed exile, Terry Philips, Tony Randall and Kenny Myers also made appearances. RFL were also on 819 kHz in the London area, with some separate programmes just for this service.

OTHER STATIONS:

UK RADIO on 6266 kHz 25th to 28th Dec, 1st Jan and 3rd Jan.

WEEKEND MUSIC RADIO 7446 kHz Sun 10th Jan.

RADIO MIRAGE 6200 kHz (via Radio Zodiac) Sun 3rd Jan.

RADIO ZODIAC 6270 kHz Sun 3rd Jan with Steve Kent who I'm sure said it was the station's last year on the air.

MEDIUMWAVE:

RADIO ARGUS have been heard on 1593 kHz in the London (and beyond) area on Sundays. Yet another LASER HOT HITS has also been logged on Saturdays on 1575 kHz from North Kent (give out 9 The Hollies, London address as used by Argus).

OTHER:

On Glen Hauser's World of Radio programme he gave out the frequencies that may be worth a try if you want to listen for these round-the-world hot air balloonists that seem to be in the news a lot as they each compete to circumnavigate the globe: 5451, 6550, 8822, 10045, 11288, 13312, 17964 and 21931 kHz - presumably USB. He also gave out a 3 MHz channel, but I missed this one.

Medium Wave from a tower-block. The Fuller Aerial

By Q. S. Ellery

For many years the only «known» way of putting out a land-based MW station was to use the theory that the rig had to sit on the ground, and be attached to radials and / or earth spikes, and the antenna had to run up and over as many trees as possible. Other ideas involved running the antenna from the ground up to a point near the top of some building.

No one considered the idea of siting the rig *above* the aerial. This was considered too stupid for words, but it took someone to think laterally about it (over several pints of Fuller's ESB) to realise that there was no reason why it wouldn't work.

As far as R.F. is concerned, a Tower block, with all the steel reinforcements, lightning conductors, etc is nothing more or less than a rather strange shaped hill. Running an antenna at 45 degrees from the top towards the ground is no different to running the same antenna horizontally across a steep valley. (Rotate the block and ground through 45 degrees and you have the same effect.)

Another advantage of using a rig at the top of a block is that it can be linked to more easily, on Band 1 or 3, and live programmes put out.

Yet another advantage... All tower blocks have mains in the lift or boiler rooms, so the business of lugging around car batteries becomes redundant.

And yet another advantage... The tops of blocks are always locked up, so there's no chance of someone walking his dog stumbling over radials, loading coils, etc. The only person who can touch that rig is the care taker (who won't know about it if you're quiet), or the PTT / DTI, who will be more likely to raid a field site, as you need more power from a field site.

The first ever attempt at this side was made by Radio Jennifer, in the late 1980's and the signal, for a first attempt, was heard throughout London, and well into the «Home Counties», with only 10 watts of transistorised rig.

Other stations, such as The Edge and Radio Argus have used this method since, and have all noted that hardly any power is needed to cover large distances. The Edge, on 819 kHz, got from London to Bristol, and Radio Argus, on 783 kHz also from London, was heard from Norfolk to Sussex. Both stations were running around 10 watts.

To cover the same distances from a field site you would need about 5 times that wattage.

So, how do you do it?

First, you need the rig, a reel of insulated 7/0.22 wire, (cut to a ¼ wave), some see-through fishing line, (breaking strain over 40lbs - tell the shop keeper you're going for a shark this weekend!), link equipment, or auto-reverse walkman, depending if you're putting out live or pre-recorded shows. A file, and some thick wire, with an earth tag.

The output socket from the rig need not be a BNC or PL259 socket; just a terminal block will suffice. The author has noted that even small lengths of co-ax can for some unknown reason, reduce the power, and in any case, it is easier to screw in the antenna and earth wire. Don't worry if the first few metres of antenna make contact with doors, block edges, etc.

Up the block. Run the mains, plug in, but don't switch on. Attach the earth wire to the lightning conductor, using the earth clamp, after filing the corrosion from the lightning conductor. Then attach the earth wire to the rig.

Next attach the antenna to the rig, walk to the edge of the block, and, after checking there's no one about let it go. (It helps if there's someone on the ground to catch the wire, but not essential.)

On the ground, retrieve the wire, and start walking away from the block, unreeling and keeping the wire taut.

When the wire looks like running out, tie on the fishing line, and keep walking. In this way, the antenna ends in free space. Finally, tie off the fishing line to a tree, lamppost etc, *but above head height ... we don't want to behead a jogger!!!* (On second thoughts...)

Back to the block, attach the link / Walkman, fire up, and clear off.

OK, so the rig's on the air, you've told everyone, and Derek Taylor is going to listen out for it tonight, you're down the pub and everyone's patting you on the back. Well done. Just one thing, say «Cheers» or «Prosit» to Dave Fuller, the bloke who first thought up and used the innovation you're now using. The Fuller Aerial.

Luisteraars en Amateurs!

NEWS FROM THE DUTCH MEDIUMWAVE SCENE

Welcome to the first edition of this separate column for Dutch mediumwave pirates. I would like to point out right away that *this will not be a very comprehensive source of information about Dutch pirates*. There are more specialized sources of information for those who are interested. Also, I think it is important to accept the fact that the Dutch pirates are somewhat different from those who operate on SW. Many of the Dutch MW pirates are on air primarily for *each other*, and they do not want too much publicity. Although many of the Dutch pirates announce their (approximate) locations, telephone numbers and (in some cases) even their home addresses on air, such information should not be printed in any magazine. In this column no dates and times will be included either. If any Dutch pirate still feels we reveal too much, feel free to say so!

The following is a list of stations heard by myself (Kai Salve) in December. I have also incorporated Doug's December logs and Tom's December / January logs in this column.

STATIONS HEARD ON 182 METRES (1630-1660 KHZ) (ALL STATIONS ARE DUTCH UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED)

ALPINA is a station which I certainly don't hear every day. Noted early in December with that well-known «Laronda Polka»! **RADIO ANTARES (UK)** was said to be on 1650 kHz this Christmas. He was heard by Bill Lewis. Not a trace of any signal in Grimstad. Tom heard Radio Antares on the 20th of December, but the reception was poor.

RADIO ARMADA was heard by Tom on the 20th and 28th of December and on the 3rd of January.

ANTON has been very active. As I listened to his microphone-feedback one night, it suddenly struck me that - OF COURSE! - the Dutch pirates monitor their audio on LOUDSPEAKERS! Am I right?

ATLANTIS noted.

RADIO BARONES has been very active recently using frequencies such as 1636 and 1646 kHz. His programmes are always very interesting. He plays a very varied selection of music, and some of the records can be very amusing. Johan keeps playing the same records in every programme: «Driver's Seat», «What's up», «Ma Baker», «Spaceman», «Go see what the boys in the backroom will have», «Rasputin», «The Carnival is over», «Those were the days»... And he plays a lot of Cranberries! The programmes are always presented in a light and witty manner. I was amazed, by the way, when he suddenly started to spell Neede (the city where his p.o.box is located) in the Swedish manner: «Niklas Erik David Erik»! And as if that wasn't enough, the pronunciation was (as far as I could judge) excellent as well! He sure knows a lot of languages, this Baro fellow.

BLACK POWER noted.

CABALLERO noted.

CAROLINE was noted with Christmas songs and QSOs just before Christmas. He uses another name as well.

DE CASANOVAS were heard with a long and good programme on the 11th of December. The operators were the famous pirates *Mario and Weduwe*. The signature tune was of course «Wir sind die Casanovas» (I bet they are!).

DE COMMANDOS were heard with a long and fine broadcast in mid-December. (They suffered from QRM from *Vardø Radio* transmitting a phone conversation on 1635 USB. I suppose the Dutch pirates don't create too much of a problem for *Vardø Radio*, because *Vardø* is located very far north in Norway.) A varied selection of music was played.

DERDE MAN was heard QSOing early in December. Isn't «The Third Man» a movie? I'm no great expert on movies.

ELECTRON is easily recognized because of his very low voice. **DE ENGELSMAN** is somewhat weaker than many other pirates. But he's always nice to listen to. He's also active under another name.

FOXFIRE noted.

GRAAF VAN LUXEMBURG noted.

HERTOG JAN on 1645.1 kHz tends to play some fine rock music. The signal is usually good, and the modulation is very fine. Both programmes and QSOs can be heard.

INTERNOS is the strongest pirate at the moment (I think). What an uitstekend signal he has! The modulation is also very good for the bakker!

KLEINE KABOUTER (i.e. the Little Gnome!) is a station I'd never heard before.

KONTAKT is quite active at the moment, it seems. I think he varies the power quite a bit, because the signal can be everything from very weak to «uitstekend»! I think he muffled something about 40 watts on the 7th of December. A few days later he was received with a powerhouse signal.

LASER appears to be using very low power. He was heard QSOing with stations such as Sterenboog, Zwarte Spin and Studio 4 in early December. All the stations had big problems hearing him, but I could hear every word he said at my listening post in Grimstad! My Dutch is not so good, but I heard him mentioning that he could operate on 3905 kHz as well with the same transmitter (we all used to hear him on 76 metres some years back, didn't we?).

LIVE WIRE RADIO from the UK made some appearances on MW this Christmas. He was heard in Grimstad on the 24th (1637 and 1646 kHz). The conditions were very poor that particular night, and his antenna was not ideal (according to himself). But he nevertheless made it fairly well across to the Netherlands - and also to Grimstad! Some nice pop records were heard: Abba, Pussycats, Dire Straits... QSO with Barones, Studio 4 and Mi Amigo after the «show». Nice to have you back, Billo! Doug and Tom heard LWR on the 31st (1650 kHz).

MARIO was heard playing some nice pop and rock tunes.

MI AMIGO noted.

NOOITGEDACHT noted.

NOORDZEE noted.

SALLANDSE BOER was noted early one afternoon with a great signal.

STERENBOOG was heard in early December QSOing and playing some nice records. He was joined in the studio by zender Carolina one evening. The operator sent me a nice letter in which he says that his transmitter has one PL519 in the oscillator and six tubes of the same type in the end-stage. The output power is 1150 watts. The modulator consists of no less than 16 PL519s (can this be right?) and gives 800 watts of pure music-power... The antenna is a coil mounted 20 metres above the ground. His equipment sure does its job, because he's heard very well here.

STUDIO 4 is a very active pirate. The power is said to be 450 watts (or wattjes!). The antenna is at 17 metres height.

TALISMAN was heard by Tom on 1642 kHz on the 20th of December.

TIJDBREKER noted with QSOs and programmes.

TOULOUSE, i.e. the one that still calls himself «Toulouse» (the other «Toulouse» from the past now uses a different name), has been active with QSOs. Good signal here.

UTOPIA was heard one of the first evenings of 1999. I don't hear you very often these days, Wim! (It may of course be that I don't listen very often, HI.)

VERONA (the one from Achterhoek) has been fairly active. Doug writes: «What is Verona's address? I don't think the man knows himself. I have heard him announce box 36, box 46, box 56 and box 64! I was on the phone to Bill a few nights ago and we were both listening to Verona. I told Bill about Verona's many addresses. As we listened, Verona kept announcing different box numbers yet again!»

WINNETOE was heard QSOing in early December. His signal suffered from severe over-modulation - or whatever it was. I'm no technical expert! Played some rather modern pop music, which is unusual on this band I think.

ZONNESCHIJN seems to be a new station. Noted with QSOs and tests.

ZWARTE NON noted.

ZWARTE SPIN is still going strong. The Spider seems to be a very lively chap indeed. His modulation is still very shabby.

PIRATES HEARD ON 186 METRES

POLDERPIRAAT can sometimes be heard with long programmes on around 1609 kHz. He was noted in mid-December

with a «testprogramma in samenwerking met de Piepender». Tom heard him on the 26th with Christmas records on 1610 kHz. The Polderpiraat was also noted on 183 metres in late December. I suppose it was the same station!

TEXTA COWBOY has been on 1609. Heard by Tom.

DUTCH STATIONS HEARD AROUND 1470 KHZ

A few stations use this portion of the band. **NOVA 4**, **TROPICAL** (tentatively), **TESTPIRAAT** and an unidentified station have been noted there around 1500 UTC.

UK / IRISH ACTIVITY ON VARIOUS FREQUENCIES

RADIO ARGUS from southern England was said to be on 1593 kHz on Christmas eve. I could not hear them here. Bill Lewis said the power was between 15 and 30 watts. (Reports from London suggest that current activity is very high indeed - and on a load of frequencies!)

RADIO BLACKBEARD has been testing on 1566 and 1636 kHz. Doug heard him with poor reception on the 15th of December at 2205 UTC (1566 kHz). Doug also heard another test 15 minutes later that same evening - on 1636 kHz. - Very good reception on that frequency!

UCB are still on 549 kHz, and they've also started to use 1566 kHz. (It's a pity they have started using this channel as this has been a very interesting RSL and pirate frequency for quite a while.)

MW STUFF IN GENERAL

By Q. R. Emerson

100 procent aan deze kant!

If you're a regular listener of the Dutch pirates, you will have noticed that they measure signal strengths in percentages. (Those of you who find it difficult to throw together enough details for a report - why not try to note down the signal-reports they give each other? Surely this must be an acceptable «programme»-detail?) Derek Taylor once told me that 100 percent equals S9+40 or there about. Well, 100 percent doesn't always equal 40 dBs over 9, because the pirates simply calibrate their metres after strong legal stations on the band - Radio Tien Gold for example! So the percentage-scale isn't very accurate, I guess. Please tell me if I've got this wrong! (Anne once told me that the best way to understand Dutch signal-metres was to come and see for oneself!)

Harmonics

I don't know if I ought to say this - but there does exist a second Dutch mediumwave pirate band. And it's not even on MW! It's in the 3260-3300 kHz range. Many of the Dutch pirates can be heard very well on the second harmonic of their signal! One night in mid-December the conditions were rather poor on MW and I was struggling to receive a certain station properly on 182 metres. When I gave the second harmonic a try, he was received with a big signal there! I was amazed! He was a lot stronger on 3.2 MHz than on 1.6! I shall not moralize and tell the Dutch pirates to install better filters in their transmitters... (But it might be a good idea, HI.) Honestly, as a DXer I find it very interesting to hear second harmonics of pirate (and other) signals.

Mysterious record

A record that is often heard on the Dutch pirate stations is, er, «Hondersman» or something like that! (I really don't know how it's spelled - I'm probably not any near the correct lettering!) I like the tune very much. It has the same melody as an instrumental tune which I think has got something to do with offshore radio. Can anyone please give me the title?

Mysterious beacon

There is a beacon on 1645 using AM modulation (i.e. not CW). The identification is «FJ». Does anyone know what it is?

Pirates from south east Europe

Doug in Leicester writes: «Kai! Help! Were you listening to 1649 kHz on 09/10.01.99? A Greek / Arab sounding station was there from 2335 to 0042. His signal was excellent. He kept mumbling a few words - then played a brief piece of music - then mumbled again - then the same music etc etc. Boring yet interesting!»

Yves in Basel says that it is possible to ID these stations, but it is difficult. They don't seem to announce their station name so often. Yves says he's heard four pirates transmitting from Belgrade - and he was surprised to hear a station from Croatia one night.

Kai Salve in Oslo says: «I have never been able to ID a Greek or a Yugoslavian pirate. I once bought a fairly expensive Danish-Greek dictionary solely to figure out a telephone-number read out on a Greek MW-pirate. The numbers announced by the Greek man did not correspond with the numbers in my dictionary, though. Perhaps he was Turkish. The dictionary is still on my shelf and hasn't been used since.»

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